

Ms. Jami Wray
Sophomore English
Course Syllabus: 2010-2011

Room 206
Prep: A1, B1
wrayj@loswego.k12.or.us

Introduction:

Welcome to Sophomore English and your second year of high school! In this class you will be asked to participate in a multitude of activities, assuming a very active role in your learning. Rather than stand at the front of the classroom and infuse you with my knowledge, I intend to lead you to make your own discoveries. We will be exploring works of literature together as you develop and utilize various approaches to literary understanding. Classroom activities will vary; we will engage in in-class reading, discussion, group activities and projects, journal writing, role plays, and of course tests and formal writing. The amount of reading you do outside of class will vary; however, homework is certainly a considerable part of your responsibilities as a student in Sophomore English.

Course Description:

The Sophomore English curriculum focuses on our cultural heritage. We will explore the themes of accepting individual responsibility and making ethical choices in the context of the literature we read and write about, as well as in our own lives. We will study the foundations of Western culture as illustrated in Greek mythology, Biblical literature, and the Arthurian legends, as well as examine our place in the world through more contemporary pieces of literature. Throughout the year we will utilize short stories, novels, drama, poetry and nonfiction to explore the ultimate quest: the human search for self from ancient times through modern day.

Units of Study:

First Quarter:

- *The Odyssey*, Greek Mythology, narrative writing
- Biblical Literature, compare/contrast piece
- various short stories and poetry

Second Quarter:

- *Of Mice and Men*, expository writing
- Arthurian Legends, extended definition piece, Independent Novel Project

Third Quarter:

- *Macbeth*, Sonnets and poetry
- Research Paper

Fourth Quarter:

- *A Separate Peace*, cause and effect piece
- *The Kite Runner*, persuasive writing, Independent Novel Project

Attendance:

Regular attendance is critical for your success in this class. Those who struggle are often those who are frequently absent. Each day builds upon the previous, and the collaborative nature of the course (discussions, in-class group work, etc.) means that absences have a significant impact.

Office Hours:

I am available during my prep periods – A1 and B1 – as well as before and after school. I am usually at school by 6:30 and stay until at least 3:30 in the afternoon. Your success depends on open communication between you and I; if you foresee difficulty with deadlines, are struggling with a concept or materials, or just need some guidance, come see me. I am here to help you achieve your goals and realize your fullest potential.

Grading Policies:

Your primary motivation in this class should be the desire to learn and grow intellectually; however, I recognize that we exist in a larger system that utilizes extrinsic means (grades) to reward success. Therefore, the following system – which I have found to be both fair and manageable – is in place:

Homework: 20% of grade – During the year we will partake in a variety of take-home activities. You will receive credit for all homework assignments submitted **AT THE START OF CLASS** on the day due. **Credit will not be given for homework submitted late; a mark will be placed in the grade book indicating completion only.** Please come prepared and see the “attendance” section, below.

Tests and Quizzes: 25% of grade – Good readers read closely and for detail, and your ability to do this will be tested periodically. Unannounced quizzes will follow reading assignments at times, ensuring that you keep up on nightly reading. Major exams will be given at the end of most units of study.

Major Assignments: 25% of grade – This course will offer you the opportunity to engage in various large assignments and projects: individual and group presentations, papers, essays, creative writing assignments, artistic projects, etc.

Journals: 15% of grade – You will be asked to respond to many different prompts in your journals, giving you an opportunity to relate to, critique, question, expand upon, challenge, and analyze the works we discuss. As places for you to jot down thoughts and ideas, journals also serve as a more creative forum. We will write in our journals almost every day, whether in a free-write mode or a more guided response.

Participation: 15% of grade – This is a discussion-based class, and you will receive a weekly grade that reflects participation in class discussions and in-class work. You must participate in class discussions to receive credit. A variety of discussion approaches will allow students who are not as comfortable with large group discussion to participate as well. The participation grade drops with unexcused absences. It is also lowered if you come to class unprepared, e.g., no paper, no book.

Materials:

You need to provide (and bring with you *each day*) the following materials specifically for this class:

- A three-ringed binder **with five tabbed dividers**
- Notebook paper
- A 100-pg bound notebook for journal writes (dedicated to this class)
- Pens, pencils, highlighters
- Planner – electronic, paper, or other format
- Post-It tabs to mark pages

Materials check _____ (15 points)

Classroom Rules and Expectations:

1. BE HERE AND BE ON TIME

This means you need to be in the room when the tardy bell rings. I take tardies seriously, and apply the following consequences:

1-3 tardies: Verbal Warning

4 tardies: Referral and Call Home

2. COME TO CLASS PREPARED

This not only means you should have pen, paper, books, homework and journal, but also means you need to come ready and willing to participate. (See participation grade, above.)

3. RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

This should go without saying, but must be addressed. This classroom (and anywhere, for that matter) is no place for disparaging remarks, cruelty, teasing, or disrespect in any form.

Furthermore, all students have the right to express themselves. Feel free to disagree, but show respect for other opinions/points of view. How boring class would be if we all agreed! Only in a respectful environment, however, can we share opinions and enjoy challenging, interesting discussions.

4. NO LATE HOMEWORK

I will not take any late homework assignments for credit. Assignments are due AT THE START OF CLASS, so come prepared. If you have an excused absence, you will have as many days as you were absent, plus one, to make up the work. It is your responsibility to come to me to get work and to make up tests and quizzes on your own time. If you were unexcused, you may not make up any missed work, and this includes tests and quizzes. Major Assignments: If you are absent, a major assignment is still due the day of your absence, as due dates are provided well in advance. Major assignments (essays, projects, etc) will be accepted up to *one week late*, at the penalty of one letter grade per class day late.

5. NO FOOD OR DRINK

The only exception is water in a spill-proof container.

**In addition to Classroom Expectations, all school rules and regulations will be enforced.
Please read and understand the LOHS Student/Parent Handbook.**

PARENT/STUDENT SIGNATURES

I/We have read and agree to the above guidelines.

Student Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Student e-mail address

Parent e-mail address